

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The Monterey County Superintendent of Schools (County Superintendent) expects employees to maintain the highest ethical standards, behave professionally, follow Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE) policies and regulations, abide by state and federal laws, and exercise good judgment when interacting with students and other members of the MCOE community. Employees shall engage in conduct that enhances the integrity of MCOE, advances the goals of the County's educational programs; encourages student learning, engagement, and success; and contributes to a safe and positive organizational climate.

The County Superintendent encourages employees to accept as guiding principles the professional standards and codes of ethics adopted by educational or professional associations to which they may belong.

Each employee is expected to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill the employee's professional responsibilities and to contribute to the learning and achievement of MCOE students.

Inappropriate Conduct

The County Superintendent prohibits inappropriate conduct between employees, adult volunteers, and district contractors and among adults employed, volunteering, or under contract with MCOE. [Education Code (EC) 32100]

Inappropriate employee conduct includes, but is not limited to:

1. Engaging in any conduct that endangers or threatens to endanger students, staff, or others, including, but not limited to, physical violence, threats of violence, or possession of a firearm or other weapon
2. Engaging in harassing or discriminatory behavior toward students, parents/guardians, staff, or community members, or failing or refusing to intervene when an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against a student is observed
3. Physically abusing, sexually abusing, neglecting, or otherwise willfully harming or injuring a child
4. Engaging in inappropriate socialization or fraternization with a student or soliciting, encouraging, or maintaining an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student
5. Possessing or viewing any pornography on school grounds, or possessing or viewing child pornography or other imagery portraying children in a sexualized manner at any time

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS (continued)

6. Using profane, obscene, or abusive language against students, parents/guardians, staff, or community members
7. Willfully disrupting MCOE operations by loud or unreasonable noise or other action
8. Using tobacco, alcohol, or an illegal or unauthorized substance, or possessing or distributing any controlled substance, while in the workplace, on MCOE property, or at an MCOE-sponsored activity
9. Being dishonest with students, parents/guardians, staff, or members of the public, including, but not limited to, falsifying information in employment records or other school records
10. Divulging confidential information about students, MCOE employees, or MCOE operations to persons or entities not authorized to receive the information
11. Using MCOE equipment or other MCOE resources for the employee's own commercial purposes or for political activities
12. Using MCOE equipment or communications devices for personal purposes while on duty, except in an emergency, during scheduled work breaks, or for personal necessity. Employees shall be notified that computer files and all electronic communications, including, but not limited to, email and voicemail, are not private. To ensure proper use, the Superintendent of Schools or designee may monitor employee usage of MCOE technological resources at any time without the employee's consent.
13. Causing damage to or engaging in theft of property belonging to students, staff, or the organization
14. Wearing inappropriate attire
15. Other conduct prohibited in Superintendent Policy 4119.24/4219.24/ 4319.24 Maintaining Appropriate Adult-Student Interactions.

Reports of Misconduct

An employee who observes or has evidence of another employee's inappropriate conduct shall immediately report such conduct to their supervisor. An employee who has knowledge of or suspects child abuse or neglect shall file a report pursuant to the MCOE's child abuse reporting procedures as detailed in AR 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting.

Any reports of employee misconduct shall be promptly investigated. Any employee who is found to have engaged in inappropriate conduct in violation of law, Board policy or Superintendent policy shall be subject to disciplinary action and, in the case of a certificated employee, may be subject to a report to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The County Superintendent or designee shall notify local law enforcement as appropriate.

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An employee who has knowledge of but fails to report inappropriate employee conduct may also be subject to discipline.

MCOE prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint against an employee or reports an employee's inappropriate conduct. Any employee who retaliates against any such complainant, reporter, or other participant in MCOE's complaint process shall be subject to discipline.

Notifications

The section(s) of MCOE's employee code of conduct addressing interactions with students shall be provided to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year and shall be posted on MCOE and/or school websites. [EC 44050]

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 *Prohibition of discrimination*
44050 *Employee code of conduct; interaction with students*
44242.5 *Reports and review of alleged misconduct*
48980 *Parent/Guardian notifications*

PENAL CODE

11164-11174.4 *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act*

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